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ROMANIAN MILITARY NEWSLETTER

**THE CEREMONY MARKING THE RETURN OF THE 280TH MANEUVER BATTALION
FROM AFGHANISTAN**

Special points of interests:

- The ceremony marking the return of the 280th Maneuver Battalion from Afghanistan
- Admiral Gheorghe Marin paid an official visit in Switzerland
- Investment of State Secretary at the Department of Parliament Liaison and Public Information



The military ceremony marking the return of the 280th Maneuver Battalion from Afghanistan took place at Focsani on February 12, in the presence of Gabriel Oprea, Minister of National Defence, Lieutenant General Ion Oprisor Presidential State Counselor, and deputy for Operations and Training of chief of General Staff, Major General Valeriu Nicut. On this occasion, the 15th anniversary of the unit was celebrated.

At the end of the troops' review and the solemn call, the message of the President of Romania, Traian Basescu, and the message of the chief of General Staff, Admiral Gheorghe Marin, were sent.

Minister Gabriel Oprea thanked to the soldiers for the way they accomplished their mission in Afghanistan and for their courage and determination in assuming the risks in theaters of operations; he thanked to the soldiers' families for the moral support granted they offered. "I appreciate the solidarity and friendship proved during the activities with our US allies and I congratulate you for your professionalism in accomplishing your missions" the defence minister declared and continued the reading out loud the names of the soldiers wounded in combat in the area of Zabul and assuring them of his own and MoND leaders' support in solving the problems they are facing.

The defence minister reiterated the MoND leaders' concern to promote the laws meant to bring an improvement of the soldiers' working and living conditions, in solving the social problems of contract enlisted personnel and NCOs'; he mentioned that amendments to the Law on the status of contract enlisted personnel and NCOs, that would bring equal treatment of those who participate side by side in missions.





February 18, 2010

Issue no. 06

Page 2

→ Gabriel Oprea stressed out the need to increase the retirement age to 45 years so that contract enlisted personnel and NCOs' should have the same rights all military personnel have. The Minister emphasized the fact that this initiative was endorsed by President of Romania, the Prime Minister and the entire political class through their representatives in the special defence committees of the Parliament.

Speaking of the celebration, the defence minister congratulated the entire personnel and highlighted this second successful mission accomplished in Afghanistan by this unit: "Upon the 15th anniversary of this unit, I congratulate those who have served or are serving the nation under the Combat Colours of this young but prestigious unit, wishing you success, health and happiness!"

Soldiers with special merits in missions were awarded medals during this ceremony. Sergeant Ciofu Mihai was decorated with National Medal "Serviciul Credincios" 2nd class while Corporals Andrei Marin, Ciocanta Ionel, Paval Ghiorghita, NCOs Buturuga Constantin, Drehluta Florin and soldiers Cretu Ciprian and Ungureanu Bogdan received the National Medal "Serviciul Credincios" 3rd class. All the distinctions were offered based on the Presidential decree. The Minister of National Defence awarded "Emblema de onoare a Armatei Romaniei" (Emblem of Honor of Romanian Armed Forces) to Warrant Officer Buzatu Danut, Corporal Ciubotaru Bogdan and NCO Dumbrava Ionut.

During his visit at Central Military Emergency Hospital "Dr. Carol Davila" on Thursday, February 11, the National Defence Minister, Gabriel Oprea, decorated two of the wounded soldiers, who are now in hospital. Sergeant Cojocaru Florin received the National Medal "Serviciul Credincios" 2nd class, granted based on the Presidential decree and NCO Berdei Emanuel was awarded "Emblema de onoare a Armatei Romaniei" in honour of the courage and professionalism proved in mission in Afghanistan. The same distinction of the Romanian Armed Forces was also awarded to Warrant Officer Hulpoi Daniel, who was wounded in Kandahar on January 24.

The soldiers' families, military and civilian representatives of MoND, war veterans, retired military personnel and of the reserve, representatives of the local authorities participated in the activity held at the 282nd Mechanized Infantry Brigade "Unirea Principatelor" HQ.



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February 18, 2010

Issue no. 06

Page 3

ADMIRAL GHEORGHE MARIN PAID AN OFFICIAL VISIT IN SWITZERLAND

Chief of General Staff, Admiral Gheorghe Marin, Ph.D. headed a military delegation that made an official visit in Switzerland at the invitation of his counterpart Lieutenant General Andre Blattmann, on February 10 and 12.

During their meeting, the two military leaders, discussed bilateral military cooperation and Romanian and Swiss troops' participation to international missions and operations.

The Romanian delegation also visited a Mountain troops training center, a training unit for peace support operations and military observers and a training school for Engineer and disaster relief troops.



INVESTMENT OF STATE SECRETARY AT THE DEPARTMENT OF PARLIAMENT LIAISON AND PUBLIC INFORMATION



Minister of National Defence, Mr. Gabriel Oprea, introduced the State Secretary Mihail Vasile-Ozunu to the chiefs of directorates and structures from the Department of Parliament Liaison and Public Information in the meeting held at the MoND HQ on Thursday, February 11.

Minister Oprea declared that he wanted Mr. Vasile-Ozunu as the member of the MoND leading team because he trusted his capacity to coordinate such an important department. The National Defence Minister assured the new State Secretary of his support to achieving all the Department's projects so that the Romanian Armed Forces' missions should be successfully accomplished.

Mr. Vasile-Ozunu affirmed his concern in strengthening the collaboration with the special commissions of the Romanian Parliament. The National Defence Minister was assured by the State Secretary's professional expertise use in finding out viable solutions to the social problems of the personnel and in promoting of drafts in order to increase the welfare of civilian and military personnel from the Ministry of National Defence.

Mihail Vasile Ozunu was appointed State Secretary of Parliament Liaison, Public Information and Welfare through the Prime Minister's Decision no. 89/February 10, 2010.